

International Plowing Match invites students to learn about agriculture

Written By **Paula Brown**

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Summer is coming to an end, and students will soon be back in the classroom, but an upcoming five-day agricultural event in Dufferin County is giving students the chance to learn outside.

The 2023 International Plowing Match (IPM) and Rural Expo will teach students about local farming, food, and agriculture through field trips to their Hydro One Education Centre.

"We are very excited to showcase local agriculture to students in Dufferin County and surrounding areas. There will be lots of chances for hands-on learning and discovery about where our food comes from," said Brianne Curtis, chair of the education committee for the 2023 event.

The IPM and Rural Expo is a five-day event that celebrates rural living and aims to educate attendees about agriculture and horticulture in Ontario.

The IPM's education team has worked to ensure the experiences and opportunities at the match align with the current classroom curriculum, drawing the connections between food and agriculture with science, math, language, health, art, environment, and social studies.

Students who visit the match will have the chance to discover how local Dufferin County agriculture operations work and how food is grown while seeing live plants and animals and speaking with farmers.

Organizers have also prepared a comprehensive 30-page Curriculum Connections document to help assist educators with trip planning and post-visit classroom activities. The curriculum covers all grades from Junior Kindergarten to Grade 12.

"The IPM school field trip experience promises to be interactive, informative, and will engage students of all ages throughout their day at the match," said Curtis.

According to the International Plowing Match committee, the event typically hosts around 8,000 students over the course of the five-day event.

As of mid-August, local organizers have reported about 3,200 students have registered to attend the event.

The 2023 International Plowing Match (IPM) and Rural Expo will be held in Bowling Green, between Grand Valley and Laurel, from Sept. 19 to Sept. 23.

Teachers, principals and educators who are interested in the IPM field trip are encouraged to register for the Tuesday (Sept. 19), Wednesday (Sept. 20) or Thursday (Sept. 21) of the match due to demand.

Tickets for students cost \$5 and are free for children five and under. Registration is required.

Both the online school registration form and the downloadable curriculum document are available at www.plowingmatch.org/ipm2023/education/.

The deadline to register is Sept. 8.